

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for OPNAV Directives

1. What is a directive?

Directives are formal written guidance that informs and instructs Navy personnel by communicating policy and procedures used in the performance of their duties. “Directive” is a general term for an instruction, a notice, or a change transmittal. Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, a directive establishes, implements, or revises policy; delegates authority or assigns responsibility or action; assigns a mission, function, or task; or establishes a form or an information collection requirement.

2. How is the identification number for a directive correctly determined?

Directives, as with other Navy correspondence and documents, are associated with a Standard Subject Identification Code (SSIC). The SSIC needs to reflect the most important subject covered in the directive. The originator/subject matter expert of the directive determines the appropriate SSIC per SECNAV M-5210.2 of July 2012.

3. How is the consecutive number for a new instruction determined?

The consecutive number is assigned in numerical sequence availability by the Navy command/activity directives control point. The consecutive number for a new OPNAV instruction will be assigned by DNS-15 (OPNAV Directives Management Program Office) when DNS-15 receives the directive via the TV-5 OPNAV Tasker System for directives and signature clearance review. As an example, for SSIC 5215, the last consecutive number used for an OPNAV instruction is 17, therefore, the next available number is 18, which will be used for the next new OPNAV 5215 instruction. For records purposes, consecutive numbers can never be reused, even if previously canceled.

4. Are there any resources available that provide directives format guidance?

Refer to OPNAVINST 5215.17A, Navy Directives Management Program, and OPNAV M-5215.1, Navy Directives Management Program Manual, May 2016, as well as information under the “How To” tab on the Department of Navy Issuances (DONI) homepage. DONI includes templates for an unclassified instruction, notice, and change transmittal; various directives training; directives processes; a directives review checklist; guidance on cancelling an OPNAV instruction; and sample cancellation action memos, sample extension requests action memos, and sample echelon 2 directives manager and OPNAV directives screening control point appointment letter.

5. Can fonts other than Times New Roman be used in a directive?

Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, Times New Roman 12 font size is the only authorized font for Navy directives. The only exception is the font size used for tables, graphs, etc., requiring a smaller or bigger pitch, but the font must be in Times New Roman.

6. What are the correct margins for a directive?

Per OPNAVINST 5215.17A, for Navy directives, the appropriate margins for left, right, top, bottom, and header are 1”; the footer is at .5”. The only exceptions are when using e-letterhead, the header margin is .5” on that page, and when a directive has enclosures that are in landscape, the margins may vary for the text, table, graph, etc., to fit properly.

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7. What is the process for getting an OPNAV directive signed?

Refer to OPNAV M-5215.1, appendix A, and the “Directives Processes for OPNAV Directives” under the “How To” tab on the DONI homepage.

8. How is a requested or recommended change(s) to an OPNAV directive submitted if the requestor is not the sponsor or originator of the directive?

Contact the originator or sponsor directly with the requested/recommended change(s) and the reason(s)/justification for the change(s). Otherwise, send an email to DNS-15 via email at sn_op_directives@navy.mil.

9. What determines whether a change to an instruction should be implemented via a change transmittal or a complete revision/reissuance?

If a change(s) to an instruction affects more than 25% of the pages of the current instruction, then it needs to be reissued under the next alphabetical version/suffix, with a new date and new signature. Otherwise, a change transmittal will suffice for changes affecting 25% or less of the pages of the current instruction. Regardless, if the instruction is within 6 months of being 5 years old or is over 5 years old, the instruction must be reissued under the next alphabetical version/suffix, with a new date and new signature. Also, no more than five change transmittals are allowed for an instruction. If further changes are needed after the fifth change transmittal, the instruction must be reissued under the next alphabetical version/suffix, with a new date and new signature.

10. What is the process for cancelling an OPNAV instruction?

Please refer to OPNAV M-5215.1, chapter 1, paragraph 4, and “Cancelling an OPNAV Instruction” located under the “How To” tab of the DONI Web site.

11. How can the sponsorship of an OPNAV directive be changed or transferred?

Refer to OPNAVINST 5215.17A, paragraph 10. When the sponsorship of a directive has been changed or transferred, the command or activity directives control point (directives manager) must be informed in writing of the change or transfer, to include the “mutual agreement” of the new sponsorship between the previous sponsor and the new sponsor, via: 1) an action memorandum initialed or signed by the two authorities (previous sponsor and the new sponsor); or 2) an email to and from the two authorities; or 3) a tasker per the current and approved Navy tasking system.

12. Where can a cancelled OPNAV instruction be located on DONI?

After an instruction is cancelled, it remains posted to the DONI Web site for approximately 90 days. After 90 days, it is removed. If a cancelled instruction is required for business or legal purposes, please contact DNS-15 via e-mail at sn_op_directives@navy.mil.

13. Where can other Navy command directives Web sites, other than SECNAV and OPNAV, be located on the DONI Web site?

The DONI Web site includes a list of links to other DoD and Navy commands’ directives Web sites under the “Links” tab on the DONI homepage

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14. How are OPNAV directives distributed and who is responsible for the distribution of OPNAV directives?

OPNAV directives are distributed electronically via the DONI Web site, the Department of the Navy Classified Issuances (DONCI) Web site, or the OPNAV SharePoint Portal. The originators/sponsors are responsible for providing DNS-15 with the appropriate PDF of signed directives for publication to the unclassified DONI Web site, the classified DONCI Web site, or the OPNAV SharePoint Portal, according to their releasability. If an OPNAV directive is not published on the DONI Web site, the DONCI Web site, or the OPNAV SharePoint Portal, it will not be considered a valid and authorized directive. CDs of directives are no longer being provided as the Web sites now serve that purpose.

For any other questions and comments on OPNAV directives, please feel free to send DNS-15 an e-mail at sn_op_directives@navy.mil. Thank you!